
Preface

The Personnel Evaluation Standards have now been in print for nearly two decades. During that time, there has been a great deal of work and pressure surrounding schools, administrators, teachers, and student learning. This revision reflects both the changing educational climate and the strong effects of national policy decisions. In particular, the No Child Left Behind Act has pushed accountability of schools and teachers to extremes not seen before in American education. At every turn, educators are beset by calls to improve the quality of teachers and administrators and the processes used to evaluate them. These standards provide strong guidance for such improvement efforts.

When the first edition was published in 1988, it stood alone as an acceptable national guide to evaluating educators. Ensuing years have provided important supporting materials to be used in tandem with these standards. Joint Committee sponsors have prepared two of the best known documents:

The *Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC): Standards for School Leaders* was developed and published in 1996 by the Council of Chief State School Officers as “common standards for school leaders.”

Leading Learning Communities: Standards for What Principals Should Know and Be Able to Do was published by the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) in 2001.

Alone, *The Personnel Evaluation Standards* provides substantial guidance for educators in how to build and improve their systems for evaluating the qualifications and performance of educators. But we believe standards used in combination with ISLLC and NAESP standards or similar standards will provide stronger, better guidance for education professionals. This book, *The Personnel Evaluation Standards*, provides guidance for how evaluations are to be conducted, while both the ISLLC and NAESP standards provide direction as to what their respective organizations value in the qualities of school leaders and expect in terms of productivity. As such, the ISLLC and NAESP materials describe and set standards for what professionals are to achieve. *The Personnel Evaluation Standards* calls for the use of such parameters and enjoins evaluators to address such matters with careful attention to the propriety, utility,

feasibility, and accuracy of their evaluations. Above all, by following the standards set forward in this book, school leaders can be assured that they are conducting themselves in ways that are productive, valued by the profession, and that produce sound evaluative findings for serving student learning in schools.

Personnel evaluation is by its very nature a difficult task—too often it is done poorly with detrimental outcomes; too seldom it is done well with positive results. Use of these standards can make the difference by providing evaluations that uplift our education systems. Teachers who have been “mis-evaluated” will appreciate this book because it provides strong guidance for what should be done as well as common errors in evaluation. Teachers who find themselves in difficulty because of a poorly constructed or conducted evaluation will find that these standards, which carry the weight of the profession, can be a powerful advocate and defense. Importantly, principals and teachers who use these standards as guides to help build sound personnel evaluation systems and practices will enjoy improved evaluations and much greater satisfaction with the fruits of the evaluation process.

Many stories surround the use of these standards. My favorite stems from a colleague whose daughter received poor guidance and evaluation from her supervising professor in an internship teaching situation. With the standards in hand, this young intern confronted the supervision situation, obtained strong positive results for herself, and turned a very negative evaluation into a strong learning situation for all involved. While improving bad situations can be a substantial benefit of the standards, we much prefer that these evaluation standards be used from the outset to guide evaluations and yield positive results from the beginning.

The task force that prepared this revision worked carefully and extensively, not just with the original text, but also with input from educators in the field and with materials gathered and organized over a 10-year period. As is the case with all standards prepared by this Joint Committee, the revision included direct input from practitioners and researchers in the field, drafts and reviews of drafts, field trials of standards, national hearings on the standards, and reviews of the development process by an external validation panel. As the book cover notes, these standards are certified as American National Standards by the American National Standards Institute. That certification provides quality assurance to you, the user.

New to the 2nd Edition

Every standard in this second edition was revised in substantive ways. Long-time users of these standards will first note that the “so that” portion of the standard statements is no longer included. While widely appreciated for focusing the standards on use, there was a consensus that the “so that” terminology too often focused use narrowly and did not include important attributes. Attempts to list all pertinent “so that” outcomes yielded lengthy and cumbersome statements.

This edition retained the first edition’s organization of standard-level information—explanation, rationale, guidelines, common errors, case examples, and references. However, each section of every standard was reviewed and updated. The case studies were rewritten with new cases to make them more interesting and to

provide more extensive coverage of important facets, such as attention to cultural diversity and use of computer technology in obtaining, storing, and applying evaluation data.

Several standards changes occurred in each of the propriety, utility, and accuracy sections; standards were retitled and reordered within these sections. In the propriety section, two new standards, one focusing on comprehensive evaluation and a second addressing the legal viability of personnel evaluations, were created. In the utility section, two new standards that focus on professional development and use of explicit criteria were added. One utility standard, U6 Follow-Up and Impact, was revised extensively, and some of its main ideas were merged into the U5 Functional Reporting standard. In the accuracy section, two new standards, A5 Defensible Information and A9 Analysis of Information, were added. No new standards were drafted for the Feasibility section, but one standard was retitled. In general, the addition of new standards closed what were viewed as significant gaps in the previous standards.

The chapter on applying the standards was extensively revised and moved ahead of the standards statements to give readers foreknowledge about applying evaluation standards before they are presented individually. The new case example included in this chapter describes an extensive application. The case began within the confines of a one-day workshop in which a school team conducted an overall analysis of a school district's personnel evaluation system. Preliminary findings from that analysis led to a partitioned and more in-depth analysis of selected parts of the evaluation system. We think readers will appreciate the approach employed by that district.

The Audience for This Book

If you teach or provide professional development instruction, this book provides a wealth of information and materials for your use. The book is a must for teacher and administrator preparation. The case examples describe real situations, not made up or hypothetical possibilities. They convey what has been done and what can be done in actual school and university settings. Individual workshops and even full courses can be constructed from these examples. As a getting-started tool, individual standards and case examples can be discussed as part of instruction or evaluation development efforts. Certainly, the situations described, the guidelines, common errors, and case examples bring attention to major issues in a direct and interesting way.

Thank you for selecting this book and for using it to improve your education personnel evaluation practices. Please use it regularly as a working tool. Reference it, mark it up, dog-ear it, and make it your own. As you see ways in which these standards can serve you better, please bring your ideas and suggestions to the attention of the Joint Committee. We continually seek to improve these standards. We need input from you and your colleagues in the field to help us build improvements into our next edition confidently and competently.

*Arlen R. Gullickson, Chair
Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation*